

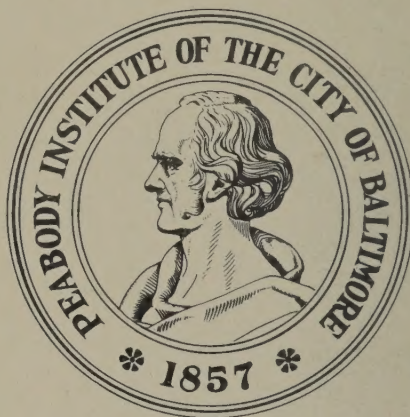
• HARGROVE - SERMON - BALTIMORE, 1816 •

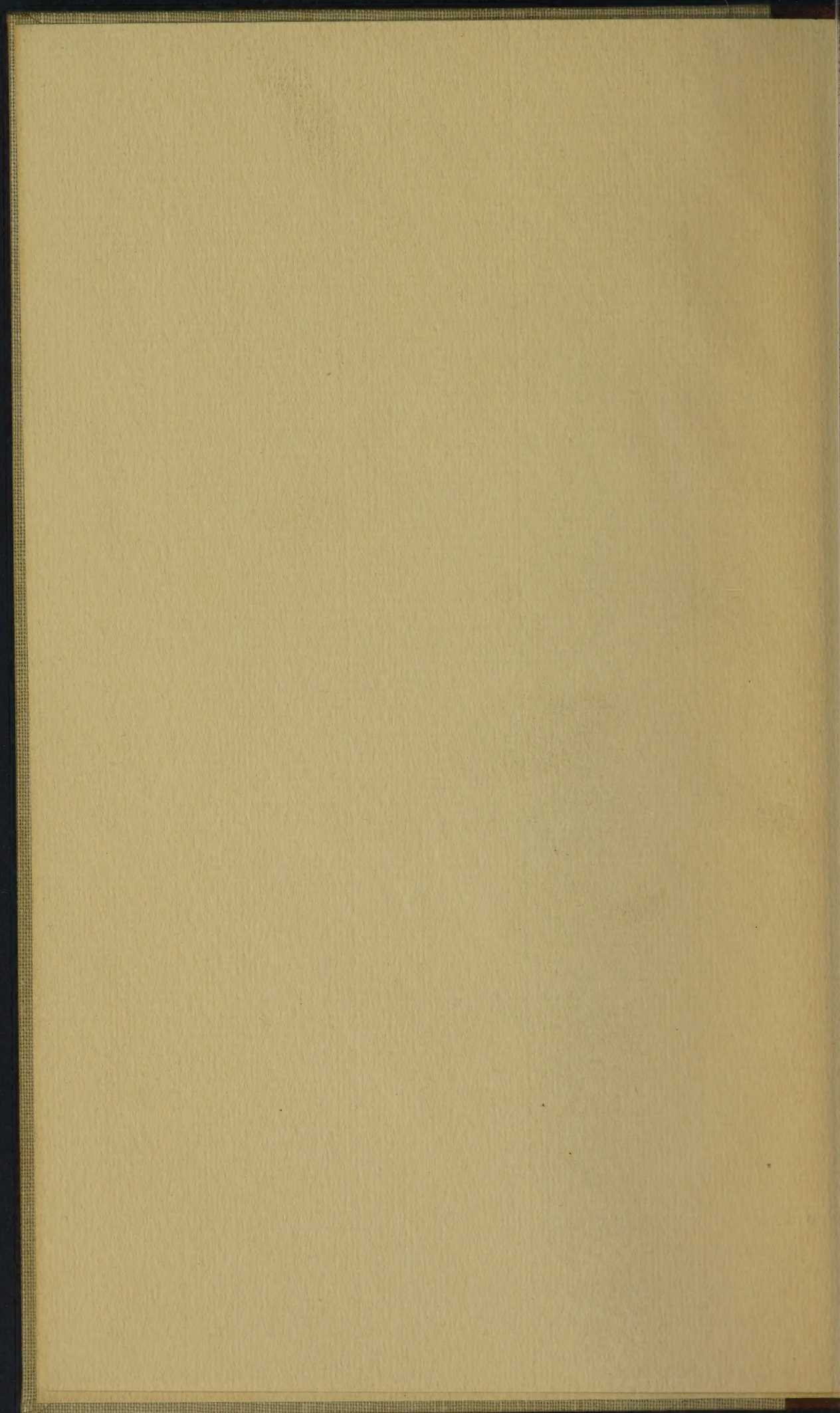


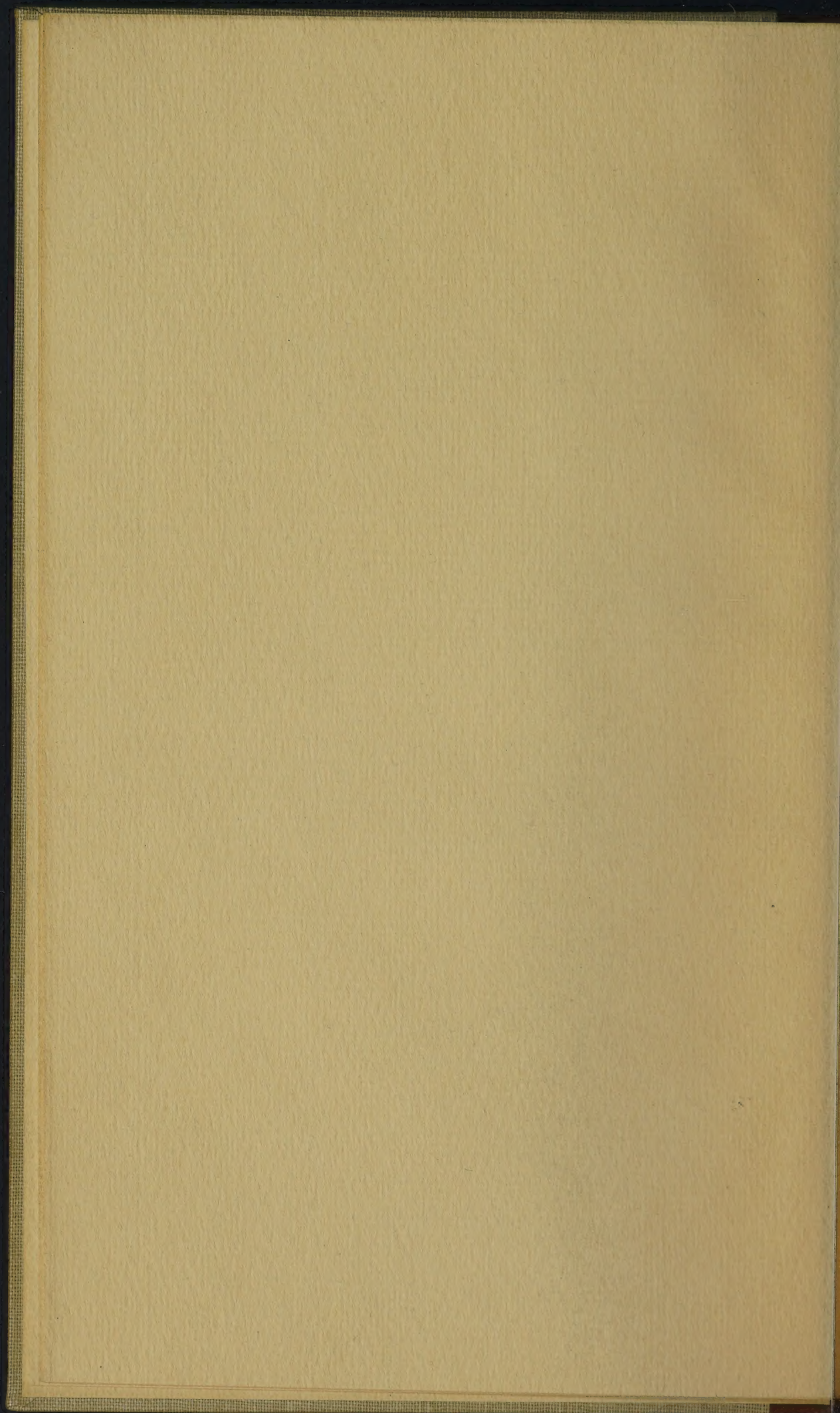


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SERMON

ON THE TRUE NATURE OF THE

RESURRECTION OF MAN;

Delivered the 11th February, 1816, in the

NEW JERUSALEM TEMPLE,

IN THE CITY BALTIMORE,

ON A

FUNERAL OCCASION.

BY JOHN HARGROVE, M. N. J. C.

Published by Request.

“ I believe that immediately on the death of the material body Man rises again, as to his spiritual and substantial body, in which he appeareth in a perfect human form, and thus that death is only a continuation of life.”

New Jerusalem Creed.

“ Thou sowest not that body that shall be.”

St. Paul.

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1816.

THE

STORY OF THE

REPUBLIC

OF THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

AND

THE

PEOPLE

OF THE

WEST

AND

THE

INDIAN

TRIBE

SERMON, &c.

My Beloved Friends,

I NEED not observe that several of you who are here present, have been lately called to walk among the tombs, and to turn your attention to the pale corpse, the coffin and the grave ! But, though thus called to mourn, yet I am persuaded, that “ *You do not mourn as those who have no hope ;*” for it is the privilege of true believers in revealed religion, though nature may claim the tribute of a tear, “ *To rejoice, even in tribulation ;*” particularly when the lamented victim of mortality can be ranked among the innocent and the virtuous ; then, I say, though “ *Nature unreprieved, may shed a tear,*” still, an interior beam of joy, flowing from the *Sun of Righteousness*, through the sacred medium of the gospel, *bids us rejoice*, and at the same time *enables us to obey the heavenly precept*, under a holy confidence that, “ *The judge of all the earth does right ;*”—

“ Good when he gives, supremely good ;

Nor less when he denies ;

Afflictions from *his* sov'reign hand

Are blessings in disguise.”

We shall never realize this consoling truth, however, but in the same proportion as we realize and improve the divine authority and heavenly precepts of the holy scriptures. Formerly, under the Jewish dispensation, and more especially among the Heathens, good men rather *faintly* hoped, than *confidently* believed in a future state of existence ; but now, “ *Life and Immortality are brought to light by the Gospel ;*” and the rational faculty in man prepared to receive, and to rejoice in, this blessed Revelation. *Attend*, my hearers, while I announce it to you, in the inimitable language of the sacred pages :

THY BROTHER SHALL RISE AGAIN.

St. John's Gospel, XI. Ch. 23 v.

THUS spake the Redeemer of the world, to the disconsolate sisters of the beloved Lazarus : but the *busy* Martha, and even the *pious* Mary, appeared not to derive any immediate consolation from this divine declaration ; because, like too many good people in our own day, they did not fully comprehend it. Martha, therefore, thus replied unto our LORD—“ *I know he will rise again at the Resurrection, at the last day.*” Upon which the divine teacher of his church, desirous to correct that gross idea of the resurrection of man, which probably then obtained, and indeed still too much obtains even in the christian world, thus rejoins—“ *I am the resurrection and the life ; he who believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*” As if he had said, cease to indulge the gloomy and absurd idea that your brother is not to rise from the dead until some far distant and unknown period, connected with the dissolution of universal nature ; and *know*, that every good man, soon as his immortal spirit has departed from its transient tenement of clay, enters, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, into a state of happiness and life eternal ; while all who have died under the reigning power of sin will enter, *immediately*, into a state of woe and misery.

And, my dear hearers, however painful and disagreeable this doctrine of an *immediate* resurrection may be, to such as know and feel themselves of the latter class ; yet it is inexpressibly consoling to every humble and obedient believer in the gospel ; enough to enable them not only to bear with patience, but even to *rejoice* in the deepest tribulations, in the hope of that unutterable and speedy felicity which awaits them, soon as they are released by death from all their mortal cares and afflictions.

But, in order to take an extensive and practical view of the subject now before us, we must recollect, and keep in view, what is written in the sacred and mysterious pages of divine revelation, to wit : “ *Blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the FIRST resurrection ; on such, the SECOND death hath no power.*” The reference in this passage, to a *first* resurrection, very naturally leads the mind to the idea of a *second* resurrection ; and yet it will be very difficult to point out a passage in all the holy scriptures, which clearly an-

nounces a *second* resurrection. Two distinct resurrections, however, there certainly are, or may be, but no more:—1st, a resurrection of the *soul* from a death of sin, to a life of righteousness, which must take place, if ever it does, while we dwell in these mortal bodies; and 2dly, a resurrection of the *body*; that is, of the real, spiritual, and incorruptible body of man, from this natural world into the spiritual and eternal world, and which takes place immediately after the separation of the soul from the material body of clay.

The first resurrection includes in its nature, the *new birth*, or regeneration of man. The second resurrection restores (to all who were the happy subjects of the first) all the fullness of that redemption wrought out for us by an *Incarnate God*;—both these resurrections therefore, are alluded to by our LORD, in his rejoinder to the afflicted sister of Lazarus.

The Apostle Paul, also, had the same views respecting the nature of the first resurrection, when he addressed the Collosians in the following words: “*If ye be RISEN with Christ, seek those things which are above;*” wherein he evidently compares the happy state of the believing Collosians to a resurrection from the dead, similar to that of our LORD’s resurrection; and so indeed it was; for, as the resurrection of our LORD was attended and followed by an elevation of those heavenly principles which form his spiritual body, whereby the then *new*, or christian church, even in its very infancy, became *raised* above the prevailing errors of the former, or Jewish church, which then lay as in a state of spiritual *death*; so also, when the same holy and divine principles (I mean the principles of love and wisdom) are elevated by regeneration, in the soul of man, and thereby become his chief or ruling love, he feels, in consequence, that a blessed resurrection is indeed effected, whereby all the powers and faculties of his soul are restored, as it were, to life and action, and are thenceforth prepared to engage in all the holy exercises of piety and benevolence.

And this *first* resurrection is not *only* applicable to every regenerated child of God, but also to the *church* of God in its collective capacity and form;—hence the prophet Isaiah, speaking of this regeneration of the LORD’s church, which should take place by, and under the gospel dispensation, cries out,—“*Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise: awake and sing thou that dwellest in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead;*” As though he had said,

The time is drawing nigh, when the holy and divine principles of love and wisdom, which form the true church, or spiritual body of Christ, shall be elevated or raised up, and formed into a new and living church in the earth; on which occasion many that were before dwelling in spiritual death, under Jewish darkness and Pagan superstition, shall be restored to the light, life, and comforts of the future christian dispensation. And therefore, in another place, the church is addressed on this occasion, in the following words: "*Thus saith the LORD GOD, Behold, O! my people, I will open your GRAVES, and cause you to come up out of your GRAVES, and bring you into the land of Israel;*" thereby intimating, in the mystic stile of prophecy, the approaching period of the glorious gospel, and its soul-reviving influence on all such as should embrace and improve its heavenly precepts.

Having thus briefly noticed the true sense and nature of the *first* resurrection, both as it refers to the *church* in its collective form, as well as to the *man* of the church, I shall next proceed to offer a few remarks respecting the true nature of what *may* be called the *second*, or *last* resurrection of man; from which you may learn, that the men of the LORD's *New Church*, called the *New Jerusalem*, do not deny the doctrine of the *resurrection*, as some have reported:—O! No, GOD forbid that ever we should deny this consoling and heavenly doctrine of the gospel; for in so doing we should deny the immortality of the soul also; and thus cast from us the richest cordial that ever the ALMIGHTY condescended to drop into the cup of human afflictions;—on the contrary, we are ready to say, with an Apostle, that, "*If in this life only, we had hope, we should, of all men, be the most miserable.*" But glory unto our ascended Saviour, and our GOD, by whose *powerful* resurrection from the dead, we are begotten again unto a lively hope—that though these earthly and corruptible bodies may shortly be decomposed, and resolved into their original dust, we possess a *spiritual*, and more *substantial* body, in every way fitted to dwell and act in that eternal world to which we are all hastening; and, that if we have been faithful and obedient here, to the heavenly and rational precepts of our GOD and SAVIOUR, "*Where HE is, there WE shall be also, that we may behold his glory!*"

That our LORD and SAVIOUR, Jesus Christ, rose with a *body*, and even now resides in that *body*, no christian, we presume, will deny; though differences of sentiment may obtain as to the true nature and quality of this divine body; these premises then being set-

tled, we are compelled to believe, that, if indeed our state of existence be at all continued in another world; and if it be the happy privilege of good men, soon as they are "*absent from the body*" of dust, to be "*present with the LORD*;" we shall not, as some good people imagine, be without *some* body; or, as they sometimes express it, be *disembodied* beings: In a word, we shall not be *unclothed*, (as St. Paul has it on the same subject,) but "*clothed upon*," with bodies far more substantial, and far more susceptible of joy or grief, happiness or misery, through the endless ages of eternity.

There is a very erroneous idea, prevailing in the world; namely, that *body* and *matter* are synonymous, or the same; or, in other words, that there can be no *substantial* form, except it be *material*;—but, my christian hearers, I am of the opinion, strange as it may appear, that this, too popular idea, has a near affinity to *Atheism*; for, would it not then logically follow, that GOD himself is a material Being; or, that he is not a *substantial* Being?—Whatever may be said then, in modern creeds and catechisms, respecting a GOD "*without body or parts*," common sense assures us that every *essence* must possess a corresponding *form*, in which the qualities of the essence inhere and dwell; and, therefore, to deny even the DEITY himself a body, is to deny that he exists at all as a substantial Being; though, as to *his* adorable and divine body it is as infinite as the essence from which it is derived, neither divisible in its nature, nor limited by space.

When the GREAT JEHOVAH, in the *fullness of time*, descended into this world, as *divine truth*, and assumed a humanity from his own divine essence, in order to effect the redemption of mankind, it became necessary, for purposes of manifestation unto men, and complete conquest over the infernal powers, that this *divine* humanity of JEHOVAH-GOD, should be clothed or invested with a mere *material* body, subject to all the innocent infirmities of human nature; and it was also necessary, according to the laws of divine order and infinite wisdom, that this GREAT, INCARNATE DEITY should assume our nature in its first principles, or, in other words, that He should be "*Conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary*;"—for human nature, in general, being defiled and depraved, from its first principles to its ultimates, if this divinely-gracious process had not taken place, the redemption of mankind could not so fully and so perfectly have been effected; as, otherwise, the hereditary corruption of human nature could not have been so intimately approached, combatted against, and conquered, by the GREAT

REDEEMER, and the infant race of mankind prepared for the reception of all the fullness of gospel grace and heavenly glory.

O! then let every heart rejoice, and every tongue praise the Lord, that by and through the mystery of the incarnation of our SAVIOUR GOD, all mankind, young and old, are placed in a *gracious* state of Redemption, and none in an *ungracious* state of Reprobation.

But to return: The holy scriptures bear ample testimony, that after the dissolution of the mere *natural* body, by death, neither good men in heaven, nor wicked men in hell are destitute of real, substantial, and perfect bodies; though these bodies, (like the world in which we shall all hereafter dwell,) will not be *material*, but *spiritual*. To instance, our LORD informs us in the gospel, that “*A certain rich man died; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments; and requested Abraham to send Lazarus to him, that he might dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool his tongue, &c.*” Now, is it to be supposed, that this *once* rich man, then in hell, could see Abraham, afar off, except he had eyes to see with; or that he could *speak* to him without a tongue? But then if he had eyes, and also a tongue, had he not a head?—And if a head had he not a *body*? O! Yes, and a body susceptible of the most exquisitely painful feelings! Lazarus also, it seems, had a perfect body, even to the very *tip of the fingers*.

Again. When Peter, James, and John, on Mount Tabor, beheld the glorious transfiguration of the LORD, it is recorded that they also saw *Moses* and *Elias* there with him, and *heard* them conversing together; But could Moses and Elias thus be seen and heard by the disciples, except they had *bodies* to appear and to converse in? Certainly not:—The disciples however, did not see and hear Moses and Elias by the mere aid of their *natural* eyes and ears; but rather by that of their *spiritual* senses, these senses being then, for wise and gracious purposes, supernaturally opened by the LORD, that his holy and chosen followers might “*behold his glory*,” even the glory of the divine humanity of JEHOVAH GOD. And indeed it is as irrational as it is unscriptural, to suppose that any happiness, or misery can be felt, either in this world, or that which is to come, without some *bodies*, or recipient *forms* into which the sensations of pleasure, or pain, must flow, before they be perceived and felt.

If then it thus appears both rational and scriptural, that no beings in the universe, whether in the natural, or in the spiritual world

can ever be divested of their proper *bodies*, or *external forms* of existence ; the only question that remains will be this, shall we stand in need of *two* distinct bodies in the world to come ? In other words, will those happy spirits, now at God's right hand, or in his heavenly kingdom, stand in need of *another* and *grosser* body, at some future and unknown period, in order to increase their spiritual and celestial happiness ?—Or, shall the spirits of wicked men, now in hell, be invested with other and grosser bodies hereafter, in order that *they* may feel more exquisite misery ?—Let the rich glutton in hell ; and let all the heavenly host be summoned to answer this question ! O ! Says the former, “ *Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame !*”

How inexpressibly painful must this unhappy spirit's sensations be at that moment ? And how exquisitely calculated must his *spiritual body* be, to perceive and feel such unutterable anguish ?

But let us turn to a more pleasing sight. Who are those bright celestial forms, that, by faith I see, in yon blest mansions, close to the throne of God ? The blessed disciple has informed us : “ *These are they who have come out of much tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ; therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them : They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ;—and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*”

And is it possible that these glorified spirits, who are thus *led* and *fed* by their *Saviour* and their God ; and who are so fully and so happily employed in his heavenly service, will ever want, or feel the need of any other *bodies* beside those they now have ? No my beloved, any other body, and particularly a body more gross than that they now have, would *impede* rather than *promote* their celestial and eternal joys.

Both reason and scripture teach us that the real, and distinguishing principles of human nature are Rationality and Free-will ; and also that these principles are *spiritual*, and not at all *material* ; though it is certain that these principles cannot be manifested and brought into operation in this *natural* world without the aid or me-

dium of some suitably organized *material* bodies; but it by no means follows, that we shall want or need such *gross material* bodies in the world of spirits.

Indeed it is a truth well established, and generally acknowledged, that our material bodies are in a continual state of mutation or change, owing to the necessary and successive supplies they receive from our daily food; consequently, we have not the same *material* bodies now, that we had some years ago, or that we shall have some years hence, if we live:—May it not be asked then, which body will be hereafter raised from the dead—that which we possessed some years ago? That which we possess at present? Or, that which we shall have in some years to come?

Add to this the reflection that the mere material bodies of many persons have been frequently devoured by beasts, birds, or fishes, and sometimes even by their fellow men; and, consequently, *transmuted* or *changed*, into the corporeal bodies of these other beings; and these, again, by a similar process, into those of others, and so on through a long succession of changes; and then tell me, my enlightened and candid hearers, (*all honest prejudices apart*,) shall we not be compelled, as rational and impartial inquirers after truth, to perceive, and to acknowledge, that the *old* and still too popular doctrine of the resurrection of the *material* body of man, is grossly fallacious, and utterly indefensible?

But perhaps some may be ready to ask again, as of old, “*How are the dead raised up?—And with what body do they come?* Shall I answer such in the language of an apostle?—“*Thou fool!—Thou sowest not that body that shall be:—It is sown a natural body;—it is raised a spiritual body.*” Or rather as it should be rendered, it is a natural, or *material* body which is sown in the grave; but it is a body purely *spiritual* which shall be raised, to dwell for ever in the spiritual world; for, as he adds, on the same subject, “*FLESH AND BLOOD cannot inherit the kingdom of God.*”

There are but two grand principles in the universe:—*spirit*, and *matter*; and between these two there is such a gulph fixed, that, consistent with the laws of divine order, the latter can never be changed or transmuted into the former, any more than the *effect* can be changed into the *cause*, or *posterior* into *prior*.

But, perhaps there are some before me who are ready to say, we have many objections to advance against this *new doctrine* of the

resurrection ; and objections which are not drawn from the imperfect principles of reason ; but from the holy oracles of truth. Let us hear these objections, and we trust that after a candid and close investigation, and explanation by sound doctrine, those objections will be found as unsubstantial as the *baseless fabrick of a vision*, and empty as the *shadow of a shade*.—You are silent : I will then advance some of the most formidable or rather *plausible* objections that are contained in the sacred pages against the doctrine of the resurrection taught by the New Jerusalem Church.

And I. It is urged by our opponents, that the Apostle Paul, in his famous chapter to the Corinthians, already alluded to, informs us that “ *We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; (for the trump shall sound) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*”

Now, with respect to the expression, “ *last trump*,” it certainly implies or involves the idea of a *first*, or former trump, (if language has any meaning at all.)—But then it may be asked, when and where was the first trump blown ? And also, by whom ? And who heard it ? The only answer that can be given to these questions, so as to satisfy the pious and candid christian inquirer, and stop the mouths of infidels, is—that by the *first trumpet*, the first annunciation or preaching of the blessed gospel, is alluded to ; and consequently, that by the *last trumpet* the Apostle must allude to the last period of the gospel, and the preaching, or promulgation of the spiritual and heavenly doctrines of that period, or dispensation ; and which, as a man of the Lord’s *New*, or *Future Church*, I sincerely and fully believe has already taken place ; the cordial reception of which doctrines or dispensation will, indeed, “ *change*” its genuine receivers, and also “ *raise them up*” from the dead ; that is, from the death of sin, to a life of righteousness.

But, say our honest opponents, the Apostle adds, “ *We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body.*” But, my beloved, this passage when rightly understood, has not the least reference imaginable to any *general* resurrection, when all mankind shall be raised up in their old material bodies, and be collected together into one place, in order to be *judged*—thousands of years after their departure from this world, and their appointment, with the rich man or with Lazarus to heaven or to hell.

For, permit me to ask, does not every truly awakened soul before me, who has been graciously raised from a death in sin to a life of righteousness, even now feel that they stand before the judgment seat of Christ?—For, where is this judgment seat? Where but in your own breasts my christian hearers?

I grant that, in a higher sense, this *judgment seat of Christ* has a reference to his holy word : to the laws and precepts therein made known to us, and recorded as our grand directory and rule of conduct: and hence our LORD thus addressed the Jews of old, “FOR JUDGMENT *am I come into this world ;*” and again, “*Now is the judgment of this world:*” And therefore such as then believed on him, with the heart unto righteousness, were not *condemned*, but *justified* before this awful bar of God.

And indeed, nothing can be more dangerous or fatal to our real and eternal happiness, than a persuasion that we are in a state of justification with God, while our own hearts condemn us ; O ! no, my brethren, in that case God who is greater than our hearts, must, (to speak after the language of men) condemn us also.

II. Our opponents press very hard upon us, with that well known passage in the xix. ch. of the book of Job :—“ *I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, &c.*”

To this famous passage however, we would answer as follows :
1st. It is certain that *Job*, long after he spake these words, to wit; in the xlii. ch. of the very same book, acknowledges that he had “ *Uttered that which he understood not, things too wonderful for him, which he knew not.*”

2dly. I find in the margin of one of my bibles, a translation of this passage in *Job*, far more favorable to the doctrine of the LORD’S New church upon the subject, and which runs thus :—“ *I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and THOUGH AFTER I AWAKE, THIS BODY BE DESTROYED, yet OUT OF MY FLESH shall I see GOD.*” To this, also, may be added the late translation of this passage by the learned and venerable Charles Thompson, which reads as follows : “ *For I know that he is eternal who is about to dissolve me upon earth, to raise again this skin of mine (or self-hood) which draweth up these things : For from the LORD these things have been done to me, of which I alone*

am conscious—which mine eyes have seen and no other, and which have all been done to me, in my bosom.”

But 3dly. Why, let me ask, may we not understand Job, in the above passage, in the same sense that the Protestant church, in general understand our LORD's declaration in the vi. ch. of the gospel by St. John, when he informs us that, “*Except we eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us?*” By *flesh*, in this latter passage, no Protestant, certainly, understands *material* flesh; but rather *spiritual* flesh; or, in other words the *divine* good of the LORD's divine love, which, indeed is the *true food* of the soul of man. Hence, as the *will* principle in man is the recipient of this divine love, it may, with great propriety be termed *his spiritual flesh*; And as it evidently appears that the book of *Job* was a book of the *ancient* church, and written under the influence of the sacred stile which then prevailed, a stile which represented *spiritual* things by things *natural*, history wise; it is rationally to be presumed, that in the famous passage alluded to, we are mystically taught that, the man of the LORD's true spiritual church, after having passed through the blessed work of regeneration, whereby he may be said to “*loose his skin,*” or mere external perceptions, together with his former “*body;*” that is the “*old body of sin;*” is thereby, and thereafter enabled to “*see God, in his flesh,*” or, in other words, to attain to genuine, spiritual, *perceptions* of the LORD, originating from the quality of his regenerated *will*; for it is an important truth, my brethren, that it is only in proportion to the obedience of our will principle to the holy precepts of the word of God, that we can ever expect to obtain any genuine perceptions of the LORD's divine nature and principles, or feel their existence in our own souls.

But III. There is a passage also in the book of *Daniel*, which is considered in direct opposition to the doctrine of the New-Jerusalem church on this article of the resurrection, and which reads thus: “*And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there has been a nation; And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book: AND MANY OF THEM THAT SLEEP IN THE DUST OF THE EARTH SHALL AWAKE, some to everlasting life; and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*”

Now, to such as are not much acquainted with the peculiar stile of the sacred pages, already referred to, we readily grant, that this

last passage, may appear not at all in harmony with the doctrine of the LORD'S *New* church upon the subject. But the more interiorly and impartially we examine this passage in Daniel, in conjunction with its context, the more we shall perceive that it must certainly be referred to the consummation and last judgment of the Jewish church, in consequence of the state of evil and of error into which it was foreseen it would degenerate and sink ; and which indeed is plainly insinuated in the preceding chapter of the same Prophet from the fortieth verse unto the end.

When, therefore, we read in *Daniel* that, "*In the last days, many who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake :—some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt,*" we should understand the Prophet as alluding to the *last days of the Jewish church*, and the commencement and establishment of the *Christian church*; under the vivifying or quickening influence of which, thousands of our guilty race should be "*awakened*" from their state of insensibility and spiritual death, through obedience to the sound of the trump of the gospel.

Yes, my beloved hearers, and we may add, with the Psalmist, "*Blessed are the people who have not only heard, but also obeyed the joyful sound :*"—They shall "*AWAKE to everlasting life,*" while, on the other hand, such as have been alike graciously "*AWAKENED from the dust of the earth ;*" that is, from their immoderate attachment to mere earthly and sensual delights ; but have not improved such gracious *awakenings*, shall only *arise*, (or be thus raised to a higher state of divine illumination,) to their "*everlasting shame and contempt.*"

O ! Then, should there be any here before me, who have been thus mercifully *awakened*, by the spirit of God, permit me to exhort them in the words of an Apostle, "*If ye be (thus) risen with Christ, seek those things which are at God's right-hand ;*" For lo ! Now the *last trump*, or dispensation of the everlasting gospel is sounding in your ears :—Therefore, "*AWAKE thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light ;*" even the genuine knowledge of his holy word.

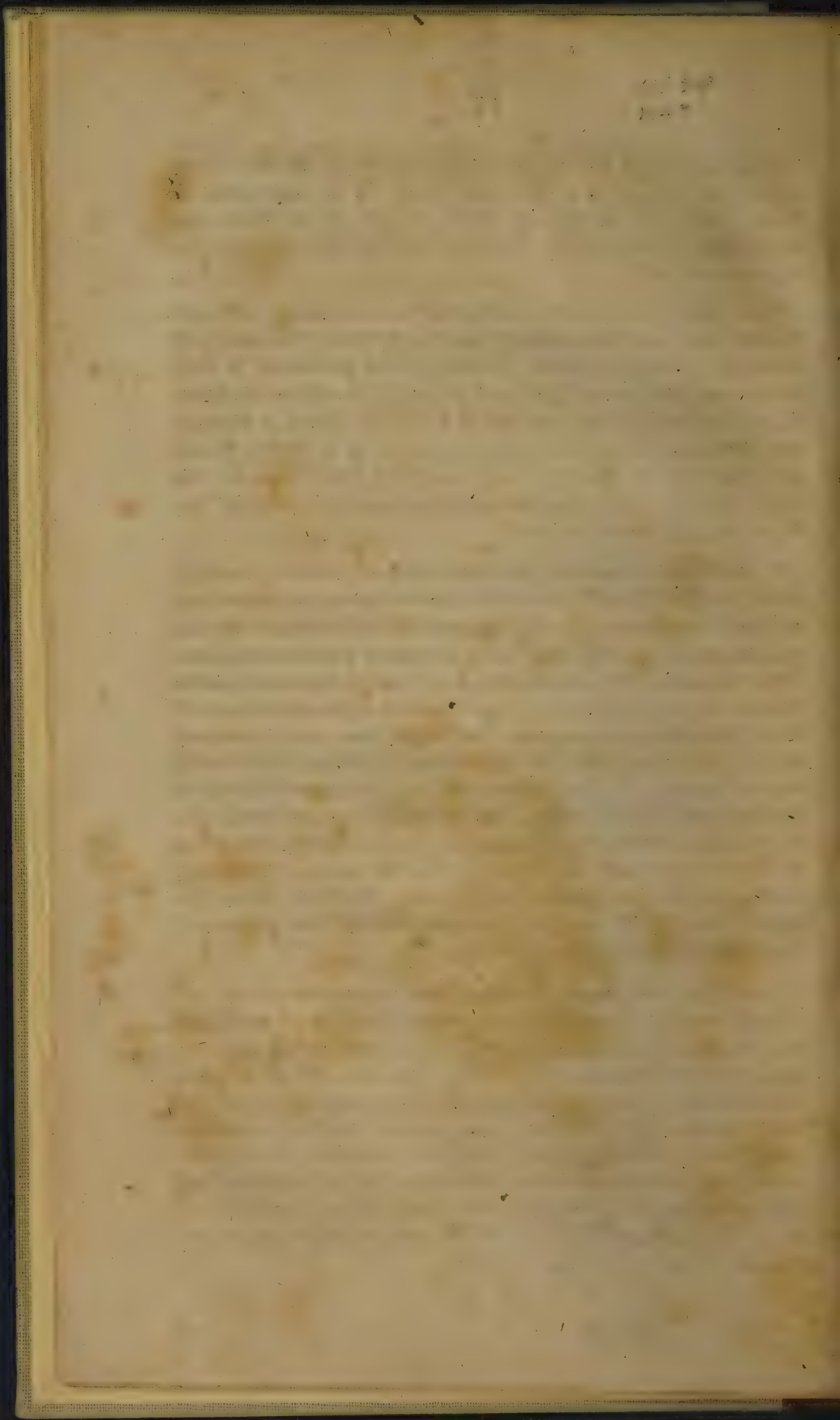
But in order to *arise* to this happy state, it will be necessary that you "*cast off every weight, and the sin that easily besets you ;*" together with all the fallacies derived from human creeds, and erring mortals ; And that you be, henceforth, faithful to former and pre-

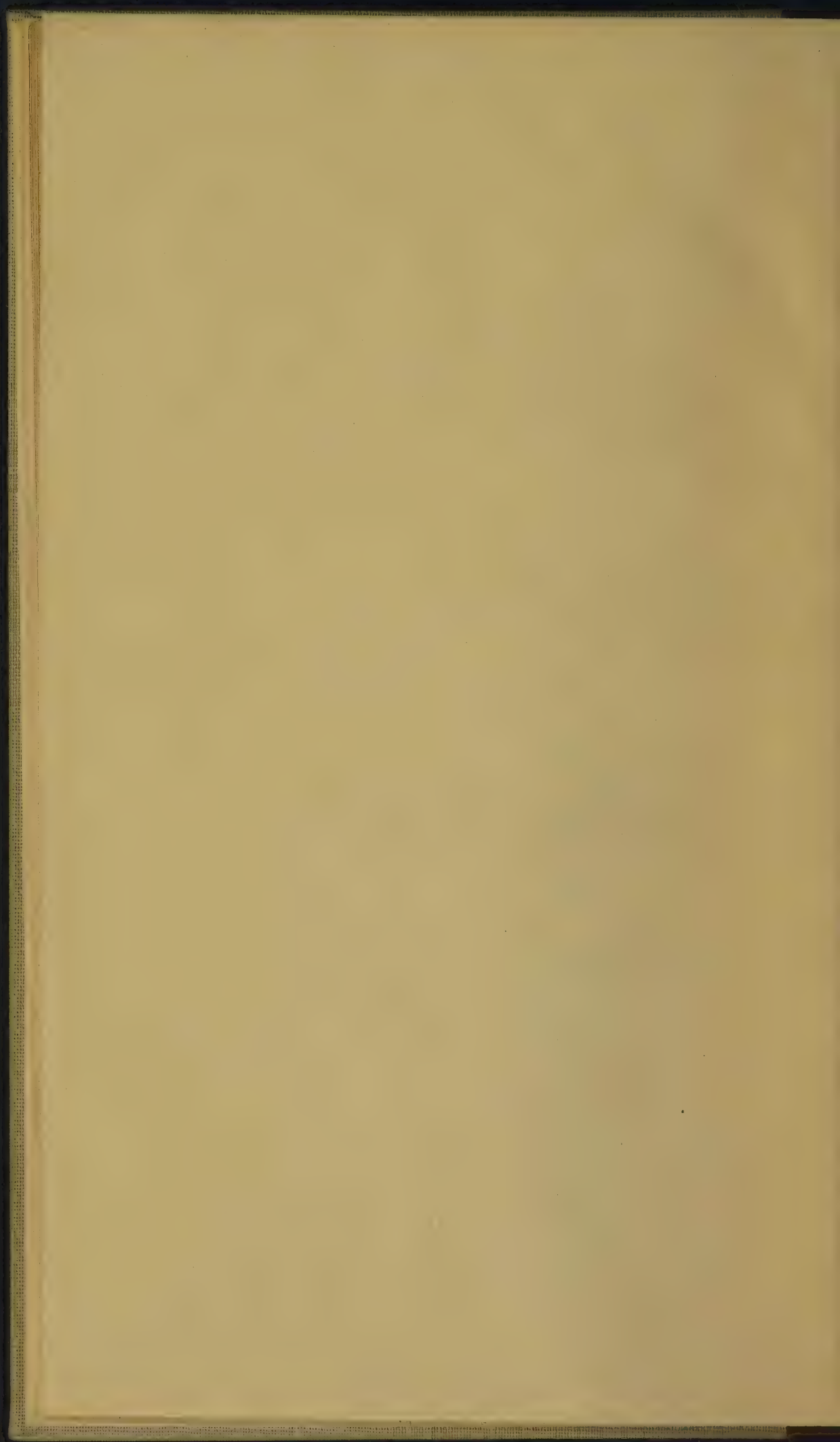
sent convictions, as well as to those that may be yet effected in your soul, either mediately, or more immediately by the holy spirit of God. Need I remind you, my fellow mortals of the frailty and uncertainty of your earthly existence, and that *death* lurks in every avenue of *life*?

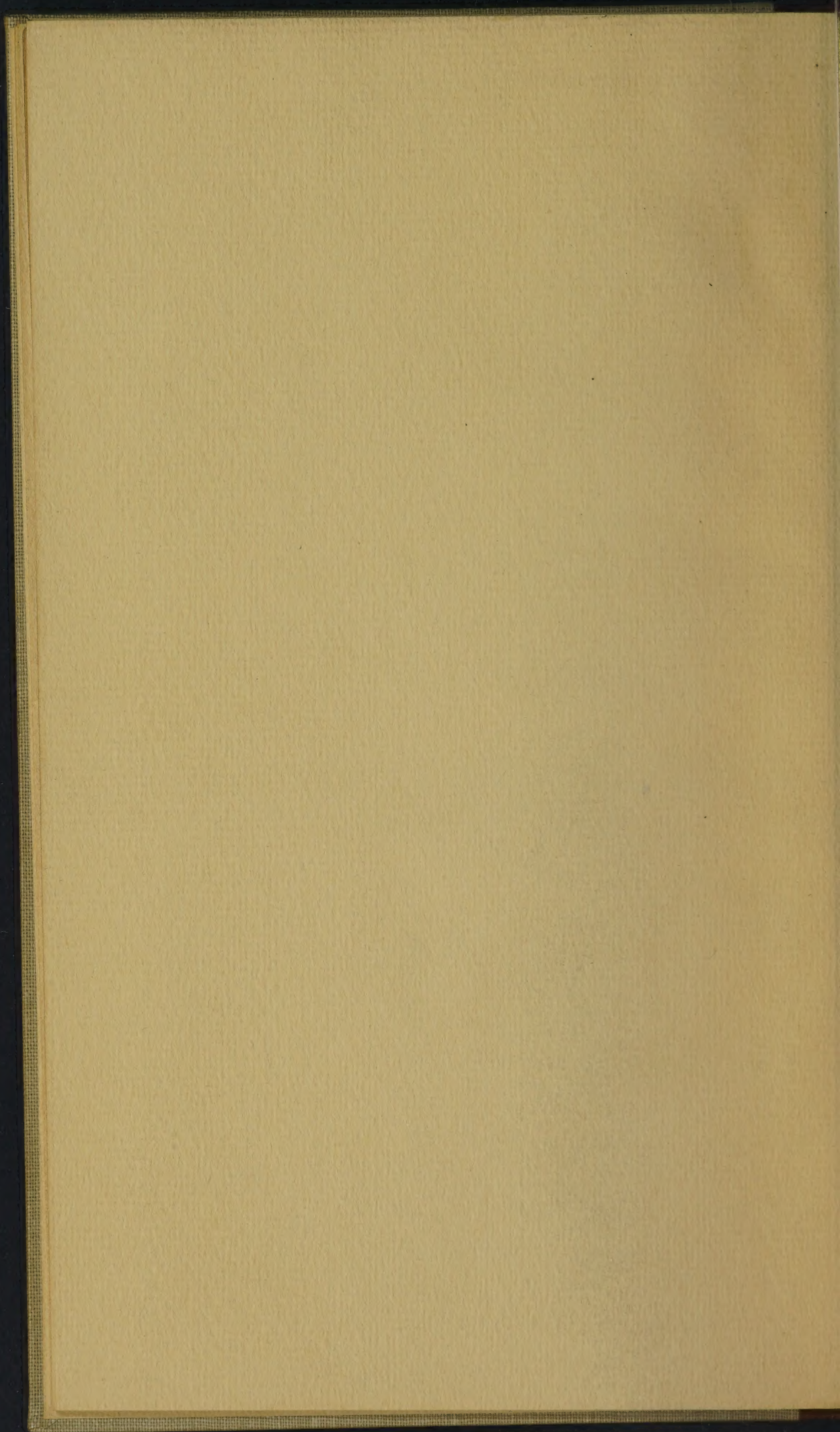
How many have we seen, among our own neighbours and dear friends, who have been suddenly snatched by death, from our fond embraces! No arguments are necessary, I am persuaded, to convince *some* before me of this heart rending truth.—You who have enjoyed the unutterable pleasures of a faithful friend; a virtuous and affectionate companion, a beloved parent or a darling child; and have felt the pang of being separated from them, in this world, for ever;—You need no argument to convince you that “*in the midst of life we are in death.*”

I would rather, however, lead your minds, my beloved, from the gloomy subject of *death*, to one of a more animating and consoling nature:—To the certainty and felicity of the resurrection of the just.—Look up: the portals of the skies are open! The heavenly hosts are all in motion: O! see their *crowns* of glory! How they *sparkle* with immortality and eternal life.—But, look again, and behold all these dazzling crowns cast at the feet of him who “*was dead and is alive forevermore.*” Hark! all heaven echoes with sacred songs of praise. Do I not hear them sing, or say,—“*Worthy is the Lamb that died, to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and worship*”—more than we can give; for he hath *redeemed* us out of “*every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation* ;” And hast made us kings and priests unto our God. Brethren: let us *join* them in this celestial song, in hopes that we shall soon partake of their triumphs and their transports.

It is true, while we inhabit these crazy tenements of clay, we can only see these heavenly objects, “*darkly as through a glass* ;” but e’er long, if we be faithful to the grace of God, we shall see them without a dimming veil between. Yes, we shall see and converse with the pious dead of past ages and generations, in glorious human form, at least so far as we are prepared to behold and to associate with them; and what is still more consoling, we shall be sweetly and eternally consociated with them, in the kingdom of our Saviour and our God; where sorrow, death and parting shall be no more. Which, may the LORD of his infinite mercy and grace, bring us all unto in due time. *Amen.*







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